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AUTHOR Calderon, Margarita
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ABSTRACT

A 5-year study, conducted in two schools on the Texas-Mexico border, is investigating the effectiveness of peer coaching as a professional development strategy for teachers in two-way bilingual education programs. A group of 24 teachers, half bilingual and Hispanic and half monolingual and Anglo participated in the study. For each, classroom ethnographies were compiled after classroom observation, and teachers were videotaped at random times during classroom teaching. Six teachers were observed all day for a period of one week. In addition, teachers responded to a questionnaire on teaching practices, team teaching experience, and perceived problems and successes. Professional development sessions, during which the teachers acted as peer coaches, were also videotaped and ethnographies were developed for them. Ethnographies were analyzed for code switching, instructional patterns for each language, social/power relationships, teacher/student participation structures, and identification of particular discourse forms. The methods were found to be effective in focusing on the quality of student participation patterns, level of learning quality in each language, time and status given to each language, and teachers' professional development needs. (Contains 39 references.) (MSE)

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How a New Form of Peer Coaching Helps Teachers and Students in Two-Way Bilingual Programs

Margarita Calderón, Ph.D.

Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk
Johns Hopkins University

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HOW A NEW FORM OF PEER COACHING HELPS TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN TWO-WAY BILINGUAL PROGRAMS

Site-based decision-making has enabled schools in border cities with Mexico to implement two-way bilingual programs where minority and majority students can become truly bilingual, biliterate and bicultural. This more holistic aspect of bilingual program implementation has dropped such notions as "when to transition from one language to the other," "when students should exit the bilingual program," and "how to conform to district policies on curriculum and academic accountability." Teams of teachers and administrators in these progressive schools have found ways to develop student centered programs which are integrated with whole-school efforts to improve and enrich instruction for all students.

The students we are preparing along the U.S. and Mexico border must be able to manage complexity, find and use resources, and continually learn new technologies, approaches and occupations. The need for global and binational educational emphasis has brought out the need for "cultural literacy" and "multiliteracies." In contrast to the low-skilled assembly lines of the past, and today's maquiladoras (twin plants), tomorrow's work sites will require employees to frame problems, design their own tasks, plan, construct, use new technologies, evaluate outcomes and cooperate in finding novel solutions to problems. Since border city students live in bicultural or binational communities they must also understand and evaluate multidimensional issues that will continue to impact their bilingual society. As Luke (1996) reminds us, the 21st century citizen will work in media-, text-, and symbol-saturated environments. For millions of students, they will be bilingual or multilingual environments.

Complex instruction for the binational context requires that teachers combine a profound knowledge of subject matter with a wide repertoire of teaching strategies, state-of-the-art knowledge about learning theory, cognition, pedagogy, curriculum, technology, assessment, and ample knowledge of the students' language, socio-cultural and developmental background, and additionally be as proficient as possible in two languages. Teaching for such goals goes beyond the standard teacher-proof curriculum and traditional bilingual teaching. Teachers must now undertake tasks they have never before been called to accomplish. Yet, there is still much reluctance to change.

As two-way bilingual or dual language programs begin to flourish throughout the nation, special care must be taken to give the teachers in such programs profound learning opportunities, support, freedom within a well structured program, and resources to do their job well. Until now, bilingual teachers have been pretty much left alone to their own devices when it comes to bilingual instructional practices. Fads come and go and bilingual teachers try them for a year or two, or simply adapt pieces of a model. Accountability has been rare. Bilingual program evaluations, like other kinds of "official knowledge" (Apple, 1993), have been mediated by a complex political economy and the institutions it serves, and have been influenced to point in only certain directions. Therefore, bilingual teacher classroom performance has rarely been considered, analyzed or held accountable.

Accountability has also taken a back seat to another sensitive factor in bilingual education--the shortage of bilingual teachers. Because schools are desperate to fill the bilingual teaching positions, the selection, on-the-job preparation, and teacher evaluation systems have failed to consider quality and accountability in the practice of teaching and learning. Bilingual teachers still feel segregated from the rest of the school-wide initiatives and caught in "us vs them" school conflicts. Worse yet, because teachers have been so isolated, they have settled

comfortably into their own ways of teaching. We often hear, "We don't want to do that because..." "--because there are no materials in Spanish" "--because it's not in our curriculum plan" "--because it's not whole language" "because it's too much work!" When we combine all these factors, we begin to see why there is so much student failure and why bilingual programs receive so much criticism.

Fortunately, recent research on language minority students is starting to focus on the interaction between teachers and learners (Garcia, 1991; Tharp and Gallimore, 1991, Moll, 1990; Au, 1980, Goldenberg, 1991; Duran, 1992; Prado-Olmos, 1993; Pease-Alvarez, 1993, Calderón, 1995; Slavin & Madden, 1995; and others): on the developmental aspects of learner language, learning and teaching, and the effect of this interaction on the learner's language and cognitive development. Recent studies on critical discourse analysis also helps to analyze how knowledge, power and identity are constructed (Foucault, 1980) and helps one to see how educational research can begin to analyze discourse as a constitutive pedagogical category (Luke, 1996). This permits us to study two-way bilingual programs from an etic (pedagogical and socio-political) perspective and an emic (the construction of discourse in a teaching or learning situation) perspective.

Since people in interaction become environments for each other (McDermott, 1976), we set out to study how in Two-Way bilingual programs the social interaction processes constituted by discourse (Erickson, 1988; Hicks, 1994) and how the discourse organization or thematic content of the texts are produced from those interactions (Mehan, 1979; Gumperz, 1986). Since discourses can never be "neutral" or value free, they always reflect ideologies, systems of values, beliefs, and social practices (Fairclough, 1989; Foucault, 1972). In our study, the discourse analysis would bring out the values, beliefs, and social practices of Anglo and Hispanic teachers sharing one classroom. Taken together, these complimentary ways of exploring how instructional knowledge is "talked into being" (Green and Dixon, 1993). In other words, how do teachers construct "common knowledge" of what a two-way bilingual program should be? What is the valorization of particular discourses, subjectivities, and practices in Spanish and English within each classroom? What are the particular social relationships of power which are sanctioned and encouraged? Does Spanish or English receive more or equal status? How are particular spoken and written practices assembled, ranging from how to divide the day's instructional time into Spanish and English blocks to what types of activities do teachers structure during Spanish and English blocks?

In an attempt to answer these questions, a five-year study is being conducted in two schools with a two-way bilingual program. The multilevel study seeks to (1) identify the pedagogic variables that facilitate or impede learning through two languages simultaneously; (2) analyze teacher performance and professional development in the context of implementing complex change; and (3) to identify the most promising school structures for teacher support and collaborative professional development. This paper presents a segment of the teacher development through peer ethnographies, and on the ways teachers learn about their capacities to construct, control and manipulate bilingual texts. Borrowing from Halliday & Hasan (1985) ***text*** is here defined as language in use. Texts are moments of intersubjectivity--the social and discursive relations between speakers, readers, listeners. Readers, listeners, speakers and writers thus depend on intertextuality, repeated and reiterated wordings, statements, and themes that appear in different texts (Fairclough, 1992). This approach to critical discourse analysis sets out to generate agency among teachers in the two-way bilingual schools by giving them the tools to see how texts represent the social world, the interests and relations of power of two languages at work in their classrooms and in their own Teachers Learning Communities.

Background of the Study

The school district has a population of 750,000 and is the largest city on the Texas-Mexico border. It has a student enrollment of 64,859 including an Hispanic population of 46,698 and 14,917 limited English Proficient. According to the National Clearinghouse on Bilingual Education, the district ranks 13 in a list of 20 school districts with the largest numbers of enrolled LEP students.

The dual language program is being implemented and studied in two elementary schools, K-5. The two-way bilingual classrooms reflect the ethnic and language make-up of the community. One school is predominantly upper middle class with the Hispanic and Anglo populations almost 50% each. The other school is a Chapter 1 school with more than 80% of the students on school lunch. The Hispanic student population is approximately 80% Hispanic. However, about half of these students are English dominant. They are the children of that invisible generation who grew up "knowing" that speaking Spanish was punishable and detrimental to success.

Classes at each grade level include approximately 15 Spanish-proficient and 15 English-proficient students. At each grade level, instruction during the day is to occur 50% of the time in English and 50% in Spanish at each grade level. Therefore, students are placed in cooperative learning teams of four, where two are the Spanish experts and two are the English experts. The purpose of this configuration is to enable the Spanish proficient students to learn English through extensive interaction with English role models and without lagging behind academically. Concomitantly, it is to provide opportunities for native English speakers to learn all subject matter in Spanish, and become proficient in the second language of the community. Students are taught to work together in a mutually supportive environment. Their curriculum is based on Team Inquiry, Group Investigation and the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition instructional models (Hertz-Lazarowitz & Calderon, 1992; Stevens, R.J., Madden, N.A., Slavin, R.E., & Farnish, A.M., 1987; Calderón, 1994).

Each class is staffed by two teachers who collaborate in the teaching process, one is bilingual and one is monolingual. All subject areas are taught through themes and lines of inquiry. Literature in both languages is used to teach reading, writing and language arts.

The teachers are free to choose what and when they teach in Spanish and English each day, as long as they keep the 50-50 balance. They might teach an integrated math and science segment in Spanish to be followed by a related social studies problem in English. Some weeks, the students start out most of the day in one language, but the percentage is supposed to even out as the week progresses. The two teachers use one classroom for teacher directed instruction and cooperative learning, and the other for computers and learning centers. While one teacher is conducting direct instruction, the other is facilitating group work or monitoring.

The teacher support structures are characterized by broad participation in decision making by the teachers. They write and update their curricula in the summers, they make decisions about grading, reporting grades, parent involvement activities, and all the main issues that impact their daily lives.

The professional development program for the teachers consisted of ten days of workshops on curricular, pedagogical and assessment approaches. The workshops provided theory, demonstrations in Spanish and English of the teaching models, and time for debriefing and reflection after each demonstration. The follow-up to the workshops was a monthly two-hour session called the Teachers' Learning Community (TLC).

Methodology

The participants in this portion of the five-year study are 24 teachers from two schools, twelve from each school. Half are bilingual and half are monolingual. All bilingual teachers are Hispanic; all monolingual teachers are Anglo. Classroom ethnographies were compiled for the 24 teachers through all-day observations, twice in the fall and twice in the spring by trained observers. All teachers were arbitrarily video taped for an hour at randomly selected times during the day. Six of the teachers were observed all day, for a whole week. The teachers also responded to a twenty-question essay-type questionnaire asking them to elaborate on their teaching practices, team-teaching experiences, perceived problems and successes. The group of 24 teachers was also observed and video taped once a month during their two-hour Teachers Learning Community (TLC) sessions.

Classroom and TLC ethnographies were analyzed at various levels and are still being analyzed. Discourse analysis consists of: shifts in use of Spanish and English; instructional patterns for each language; social relationships of power; teacher and student participant structures, and identification of particular discourses (Foucault, 1979; Fairclough, 1992; Halliday, 1978; Erickson, 1988; Gumperz, 1986). This paper focuses on the shifts in language use and how their analysis became a tool for professional development and for helping teachers make necessary changes in their instructional routines.

Results

During the TLC sessions, teachers were asked to take on the roles of peer-coaches, classroom ethnographers, trainers of other teachers, and curriculum writers. The emphasis on these new participant structures created new tasks and other ways of looking at their daily routines. Peer coaching became a way of doing classroom ethnographies. Simple ethnographic techniques were demonstrated so they could practice and experiment in their classrooms with their peer coaches. Each teacher did a mini-ethnography while the other was teaching. They scripted a segment, then analyzed and discussed the data together. They brought samples for discussion to the next TLC meeting.

These scripts consisted of what occurred during a 30 to 90 minute instructional segment. These simple time-dependent observations gave teachers a point of departure for further study and refinement. The scripts were written mostly in English. Monolingual English teachers had no problem identifying participant structures or key events in teaching/learning segments even though the instructional conversations were conducted in Spanish. Below are four examples that generated extensive discussion at one of the TLCs.

TWO-WAY BILINGUAL CLASSROOM #1 - 3rd grade

8:20	Math review- 100s
8:35	Math new instruction - 1000s
8:50	Math in Presidential Unit -- in teams of four -research questions on presidential facts
9:05	Explanation of how to work together on these story problems -students begin their work
9:15	Review of organizational strategies for more effective work
9:28	Students begin work again
9:40	Reality check "Who's finished?" "come help this other team" "You have 10 more minutes"
9:50	Students finish, put work away. -Potty break for everyone
90 minutes	

During the 22 minutes, students worked with partners on ten sets of English word problems that integrated social studies and math such as: Find out who lived the longest: Lincoln or Juárez?. How many presidents were there between Washington and Lincoln? Who were they? How many years between their presidencies? Students had workbooks with some of the information, but other information had to be found in Encyclopedias or readers on a table.

After a seven minute break, the students come bac[illegible]e classroom to continue with the presidents' theme. There was a transition activity fro[illegible]sh to Spanish in the following manner.

TWO-WAY BILINGUAL CLASSROOM #1 - 3rd grade

9:55	Students come back in and immediately start reciting English poem from last week with one teacher while the other distributes reading material and questions for next instructional event in Spanish. -students practice choral reading (first boys, then girls, then line by line, then one line soft, one line loud). -teacher asks how students "feel" about this poem. Seven students quickly share.
10:00	Students recite last week's Spanish poem. (students who had memorized the poems received reward points for their team on a wall chart).
10:05	"Compañeros juntos por favor" sends students to quickly pair up for reading in Spanish. -following the presidential theme, booklets about Lincoln and Juárez become the reading selection in Spanish. (there's a table with other books, booklets, etc. about U.S. and Mexico's presidents in Spanish).
10:06	Partner reading is fluent, interactive; students help each other; on task.
10:16	"Un mapa del cuento" -students are to map four important events in the presidents' life. -teacher explains the task and interacts with students to check for understanding.
10:35	Students begin work.
10:40	Teacher redirects teams by talking about strategies for organization.
10:45	Students go back to work. Some argue about the task.
11:00	Teachers monitor and check work by teams. Bilingual teacher checks sentences to describe each event. Team teacher checks product and process.
11:55	Large maps have been constructed and students are getting ready to present them to the class, after they return from lunch.
120 minutes	

With these two examples we see the teachers setting the stage for learning processes by providing the discursive "slots" that enable fluent and limited speakers of two languages, or as Kris Gutierrez (1995) might term, novice and expert learners, to participate in meaningful learning. They involved the students in ways of talking about math, social studies, reading and writing through negotiation and reasoning. The teachers orchestrated equal status by giving both the English and Spanish speakers voice in the construction of joint knowledge.

The socially constructed forms of discourse in one language, e.g. organization of team members to complete the assigned task and helping the partners understand in that language, transfers easily into activities in the other language. These socially constructed forms of discourse are appropriated by students and become a means for restructuring their ways of

responding to texts. Notice that both of these teachers had to interrupt the teams to help them "come up with a better strategy" as soon as they noticed difficulties. Students need time to learn to how to learn with peers. Biliteracy implies both literacy in two languages and respect for and the blending of two sociocultural systems of knowledge. This is particularly important for the minority child whose primary discourses may differ from the institutional discourses which are readily picked up the majority children.

These team teachers had been concerned that not enough time was given to Spanish instruction. They were reassured that the quantity and quality of these scripts indicated they were on the right track. Their next step was to do scripts systematically for a whole week to determine the "real time on language." Unfortunately, the result was that about 65% of time was spent on English versus 35% on Spanish. That would be the next step for improvement.

Below we see two events from another classroom that were not as meaningful to students:

TWO-WAY BILINGUAL CLASSROOM #3 - 4th grade

8:55	Teacher reads a poem. Then she says it's really a song. "What character does this remind you of" triggers opinions about other fiction and real life characters.
9:00	How would you read the part "..." helps students get into the rhythm -students go through poem and find rhyming words at end of lines.
9:05	"Lets check for comprehension" guides students to tell about their own similar experiences.
9:10	"Line up if you can sing the line after my line" The teacher selects lines scrambled throughout the song. She sings the first line and the team has to sing the second line in unison. Systematically, team by team lines up to go to PE.
9:15	Students are out the door. Teachers place materials on tables for next activity.

20 minutes

TWO-WAY BILINGUAL CLASSROOM #3 - 4th grade

10:05	Morning message: Tengo unos errores aquí, ¿quién los encuentra? (whole-class)
10:25	Basado en la canción de esta mañana, ¿qué podría recibir el niño para navidad? -brainstorming and spoking of students ideas follows.
10:30	These are sentence strips from the story we are going to read today. Read the sentence strips in pairs and draw a picture about what those sentence strips describe. (students work in pairs)
10:52	Students give pictures to teachers to post in sequence on a long bulletin board. The pictures from the book have been xeroxed and are also placed side by side with the students' drawings. (Students sit on the floor and chairs facing the bulletin board. Students go up, one at a time, to describe what they drew).
11:08	Teacher reads the story.
11:23	Students are asked to write their own song about the same topic when they come back from lunch.

78 minutes

From their scripts we can see that the activity structure was mostly independent, without need for negotiation or reasoning (drawing of pictures to depict one or two sentences from the story). Students spent 22 minutes drawing and 2 minutes reading versus the 15 minutes the teacher took to read. Teacher reading is important for modeling or when it is the type of interactive reading that develops listening comprehension. In this case it was straight reading of the story. The many typical behaviors of non-listeners were also evident during that reading segment. The error detection activity was also extremely long and students merely practiced "guessing" strategies. As we examined this script we saw how students had missed out on learning about the story's grammar, vocabulary in the second or first language, social norms for constructing meaning, or talking about learning.

Simple scripts such as these helped the teachers begin to analyze how time and quality of learning is distributed throughout each day. It gave a clear yet concise view of time spent on each language; time on subject matter; the time the teacher is on stage versus the time the students are working in teams, partners, individually; and how the team teaching is distributed. It gave teachers some tools to step back and generate a set of questions that would serve for analysis, reflection and reorganization of time, language status, and implicit power in the participant structures. After the teachers' group reflection, they synthesized their concerns into the following questions for further analysis:

Teacher Recommendations After Analysis Of Scripts:

A. Analyze the academic objective and outcome of the lesson

1. Does the product reflect ample learning of an academic skill?
2. What other strategic learning skill have students learned?
3. What was the linguistic learning?
   The reading? The writing? The content?

B. How much time do teachers spend on

1. Explanations of the task and procedures?
2. Correcting task and procedures or re-explaining?
3. Doing too much for the students?

C. How much time do students spend

1. Drawing?
2. Making products?
3. Writing?
4. Reading?
5. Teaching and learning?
6. On the computer?

D. What is the status of L_1 and L_2?

1. How much time is spent in Spanish in a week?
2. How much time is spent in English in a week?
3. What is taught in Spanish?
4. What is taught in English?
5. How do students react to either one?
6. How are we improving on a week by week basis?

E. How's our team teaching?

1. How do we orchestrate our roles for each teaching event?
2. Who was on stage more this week?
3. How does the team teacher assist? Let me count the ways.
4. What does the team teacher really do when the other is on stage?
5. How can we balance or improve our team teaching?

The list of categories served to do further inquiry on the quality of student participant structures, the level of quality of learning in one or the other language, as well as the time and status of each language. With practice, their observations have become more focused and more profound. The peer ethnographies have also given teachers greater insights into their own professional development needs.

By creating a culture of inquiry through ethnography, professional learning was focused and accelerated. With the tools of "teacher ethnography" the teams of monolingual and bilingual teachers drew closer together. They learned about their teaching by observing children and their partner. Their partner provided a mirror for their teaching. Change became meaningful, relevant and necessary. Although far from perfect still, the teachers' continuous learning is bringing about instructional program refinement and greater student gains as evidenced by preliminary test data for the experimental and control sites. A similar study of high school TLCs and peer coaching demonstrated significant gains for students and teachers (Calderón, summer 1996).

Implications

Today, most staff development programs seem to have moved from one-shot workshops to eight-day shot workshops which still focus too much on skill and bag of tricks, are typically transmission models rather than constructivist. They ignore individual teacher's needs, ignore the context and diversity of the classrooms, and offer minimal support to teachers. The limitations of the typical staff development programs were eliminated by the teachers themselves in this study. Through analysis and problem solving attempts, the teachers knew what they needed to learn. An array of possibilities was then offered to them to continue that learning through their TLCs as they peel more layers of classroom discourse.

The TLC structures gave teachers opportunities for meaningful peer coaching, and collaborative reflection opportunities to fashion new knowledge and beliefs about their students, their teaching and their own learning. The ethnographies created a cycle of observation and analysis of concrete teaching tasks, reflection, readjustments, and a search for new learnings. This cycle might resemble the typical peer coaching cycle of pre-conference, observation, analysis, post-conference for feedback, but it went far beyond that. Most peer coaching programs do not last very long because of the limitations imposed by their narrow focus on skill development. Even the inventors of peer coaching, Joyce and Showers (1996) now admit that coaching "disintegrates" because peer coaches slip into "supervisory, evaluative comments." We have seen schools where peer coaching created more tension and dissension than mutual support.

Knowledge-power relations between monolingual and bilingual teachers need to be addressed as schools continue to seek school-wide reform. Preliminary evidence from the peer coaching through classroom ethnographies indicates that this approach builds texts and contexts for teachers for self-analysis, negotiation, and problem solving. The conversational and written texts in the TLCs establish and build up social relations and identities as peer teachers. The observation, data gathering phases are not stymied by fear of technical feedback or miscommunication. Both are immersed in the construction of meaning as they seek to understand the teaching and learning processes in their classrooms. This co-construction also gives equal status to the Hispanic and Anglo teacher. Each takes a turn becoming expert, novice and equal peer. When this balance is achieved, teachers become empowered. The tensions between official discourses and minority discourses dissipate. The silenced or too often omitted voices of bilingual teachers become an equal contributing factor to school improvement, and more importantly, student success.

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